

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1 1. A method for controlling the transmission of control information to an
2 input device in an entertainment system, comprising:
3 receiving programming data associated with a broadcast channel
4 displaying a show associated with the channel;
5 configuring an input device to operate in a first mode that suspends
6 transmission of input control information entered via said input device, to the
7 entertainment system.

1 2. The method of claim 1, further comprising displaying a message
2 indicating that said input device is configured to operate in the first mode.

1 3. The method of claim 2, wherein said message is displayed for a
2 predetermined period of time.

1 4. The method of claim 1, wherein configuring the input device
2 comprises:
3 selecting a key on said input device;
4 prompting the user to enter a password;

5 displaying a menu having at least one option that facilitates configuration of
6 said input device to operate in said first mode that suspends transmission of input
7 control information to the entertainment system;
8 selecting said at least one option.

1 5. The method of claim 4, further comprising displaying a status key
2 indicating that said first mode is selected.

1 6. The method of Claim 1, further comprising receiving an instruction to
2 configure the input device to operate in a second mode that facilitates unlimited
3 transmission of input control information to the entertainment system.

1 7. The method of claim 6, wherein receiving said instruction to configure
2 the input device to operate in the second mode comprises:
3 selecting said key on said input device;
4 prompting the user to enter the password;
5 confirming the validity of said password;
6 displaying a menu having an option that facilitates configuration of said
7 input device to operate in said second mode that facilitates unlimited transmission
8 of input control information to the entertainment system;
9 selecting said option that facilitates configuration of said input device to
10 operate in said second mode.

1 8. The method of claim 7, further comprising displaying a message
2 indicating that said input device is configured to operate in the second mode.

1 9. The method of claim 1, further comprising terminating transmission of
2 all input control information to said entertainment system entered via said input
3 device.

4 10. The method of claim 9, further comprising reactivating transmission of
5 all input control information to said entertainment system entered via said input
6 device upon selection of a dedicated key on said input device.

1 11. An entertainment system comprising:
2 a display monitor; and
3 a broadcast receiver coupled to the display monitor, the broadcast receiver
4 including
5 a front-end unit capable of receiving programming data associated
6 with a show broadcast for viewing on the display monitor,
7 a memory, and
8 a central processing unit coupled to the memory, the central processing
9 unit coupled to receive programming data associated with a broadcast channel,
10 the central processing unit to execute software to display a show associated with
11 the channel, said central processing unit to execute software to configure an

12 input device to operate in a first mode that suspends transmission of input
13 control information entered via said input device, to the entertainment system.

1 12. The entertainment system of claim 11, wherein the central processing
2 unit further executes software to display a message indicating that said input device
3 is configured to operate in the first mode.

1 13. The entertainment system of claim 12, wherein said message is
2 displayed for a predetermined period of time.

1 14. The entertainment system of claim 11, wherein configuring the input
2 device comprises:
3 selecting a key on said input device;
4 prompting the user to enter a password;
5 displaying a menu having at least one option that facilitates configuration of
6 said input device to operate in said first mode that suspends transmission of input
7 control information to the entertainment system;
8 selecting said at least one option.

1 15. The entertainment system of claim 14, wherein said central processing
2 unit further executes software to display a status key indicating that said first mode
3 is selected.

1 16. The entertainment system of claim 11, wherein said central processing
2 unit further receives an instruction to configure the input device to operate in a
3 second mode that facilitates unlimited transmission of input control information to
4 the entertainment system.

1 17. The entertainment system of claim 16, wherein receiving said
2 instruction to configure the input device to operate in the second mode comprises:
3 selecting said key on said input device;
4 prompting the user to enter the password;
5 confirming the validity of said password;
6 displaying a menu having an option that facilitates configuration of said
7 input device to operate in said second mode that facilitates unlimited transmission
8 of input control information to the entertainment system;
9 selecting said option that facilitates configuration of said input device to
10 operate in said second mode.

1 18. The entertainment system of claim 17, wherein said central processing
2 unit further displays a message indicating that said input device is configured to
3 operate in the second mode.

